

Wanderers Hit A New Low At Ilford

By "CHILTERN"

Ilford 4, Wycombe Wanderers 0

THIS garbage-can performance by a weakened Wycombe Wanderers against an undistinguished Ilford side resulted in the biggest win of the season for the Essex team. After watching Wanderers at their pathetic worst, one would find it hard to believe that they were challenging for the championship a few weeks ago.

In front of a smattering of shirt-sleeved supporters, Wycombe played as if the sudden summer sun had injected them with drowsiness. The whole defence was at sixes and sevens and the front five were equally bad.

Weakened Wycombe? Goal-keeper John Maskell cried off at short notice with a sudden mystery illness; inside-right Keith Samuels succumbed to a knee injury; and for the first 18 minutes Wycombe played with 10 men as Charlie Gale was caught in the heavy London traffic.

Hector Wells, Maskell's understudy, played in goal, and was the only bright light in this dull-as-ditchwater show. He made a hand-full of spectacular saves that steered Wanderers away from further indignity.

Utility man Peter Roystone came into the forward line wearing the number seven shirt but playing a wandering role.

And he was about the only trier. A chap sitting behind me in the stand summed the position up well when he commented: "If I was that number seven I'd stop trying and play like the others. He can't do the lot himself."

Right from the start Ilford looked the better combination. With the too-hard ball bouncing high on the bare Lynn-road pitch, they realised straight away that the answer was to keep it on the deck.

Wells executed his first wonder-save in the 11th minute when he somehow managed to react quickly enough to knock a close range header from Martin over the bar.

Sluggish Wycombe's attacks were few and far between. Bates missed a couple of first-half chances, and then retired into oblivion on the wing.

Thompson and Merrick had poor games, and Horseman tried hard but got little support. Then he too gave up.

Right-back Dave Bradshaw had an appalling game, several times being beaten by an ageing Rutter. More than once he put his own goal in jeopardy with badly judged passes in his area.

Rundle, usually so solid, also had the Wycombe hearts in their mouths a few times with mistimed short passes in front of his goal.

Ilford went ahead with a grand long-shot by Peacock in the 22nd minute, and just before half-time Coughlan notched his 10th penalty goal of the season after hands by Gale.

Straight from the restart Ilford went further ahead. Rutter shot at short range and hit a post. As the Wycombe defence gaped unbelievably at him he strolled forward to roll the rebound home.

Wells made a couple more good saves, one in particular to a cannonball free-kick, before Pook got the fourth 10 minutes before the end.

Wycombe.—H. Wells; D. Bradshaw, J. Beck; B. Baker, I. Rundle, C. Gale; P. Roystone, S. Thompson, P. Bates, T. Horseman, L. Merrick.

Ilford.—J. Hutson; A. Coughlan, D. Halliday; R. Peacock, M. Bullman, P. Betson; J. Martin, S. Pook, A. Christmas, R. Tappin, B. Rutter.